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A Spiritual LOOKING-GLASS,

Wherein
Is briefly discoursed the
Excellency, and the necessity of saving
FAITH.

AND
Likewise how it may be
known, whether we have this FAITH, or
no.

BEING
The Substance of two Ser-
mons, Preached in London, July the 23.
1671.

By Sam. Pack, Preacher of the Gospel.

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A Spiritual Looking-glass.

Acts 16. V. 31. *And they said, believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved.*

IN this Chapter we have a conspicuous manifestation of that enmity that is in the Devil, that evil one against God, the fountain of goodness. We see in this Chapter, that no sooner had the Lord Jesus Christ, that Prince of peace, sent *Paul and Silas* those Sons of Peace, to Preach unto the World the *Gospel* of peace, in order to the bringing in of poor Souls to the God of peace; but presently the Devil shewed his enmity against man, by endeavouring to stop the course of the gospel, and thereby to hinder Souls from coming to Jesus Christ. The Prince of Darkness that rules in the hearts of

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the Children of darkness, did no sooner see
that our Lord Jesus Christ had by his Servant
Paul, cast the Devil of sooth-saying out of a
Maid, but presently he shews his enmity in
filling the heart of her Master with a persecuting
spirit, being ushered in by an inordinate
love to the World, and this we see in the 19.
vers. *And when her Masters saw the hope of
their gains was gone, that caught Paul and Si-
jas, and drew them into the Market place un-
to the Rulers.*

This poor Maids Masters, instead of being
thankful to God that had gained the Soul of a
poor Maid, that did practice unlawful arts, he
was enraged, because that their temporal,
earthly gain was gone : I do verily think that
tis one of the surest peices of Armour that the
Devil hath (even this inordinate love to the
World) for the defence of his own Kingdom;
when the Devil sees that no course will serve
to keep souls at a distance from Christ, then
he betakes himself to this weapon, the inordi-
nate love to the world, and that doth seldom
or never fail him ; and this we may see in
Demus ; **Demus** he made a large profession of
Christ, as you may see in the Epistle to Phi-
lemon, 24. v. and yet you see the Devil over-
came him with this approved peice of armour,
inordinate love to the world, and did thereby
bring

bring him to Apostacy ; well we see how far the Devil did prevail, 2 Tim. 4. ic. not only to set this poor Maids

Masters in a rage, but also to set the Rulers in a rage likewise ; nay, he prevailed so far, that they were scourged, and they were thrown into Prison, and cast into very great afflictions, and had their feet made fast in the Stocks : now, one would have thought, that it was high time for the Devil to get into his Chariot of Triumph ; now, one would have thought, that the enemy having such advantage, and those servants of God such disadvantage as they had, that now the Gospel would have been stopped in that place, and that the Devil should have lost no more of his Subjects ; for my Friends, if you look in the beginning of the Chapter, you shall see in the 9th. vers. there appeared to *Paul* a Vision, for to go over to *Macedonia* ; without question this Vision which *Paul* saw, was a great encouragement to him, to go to *Macedonia* ; and now when he was come there, as soon as ever he had cast a Devil out of one Maid, presently they must be cast into Prison ; without question, had not *God* come in with flesh supplies of comfort, these poor men would have been at a great loss, they would have been in such disheartned in their work ; and this the Devil

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Ezek. 1. 16. knew would be a very great dis-
couragement to them; but now
my Friends, behold a wheel
within a wheel, all this while the providence
of God doth seem to go upon the wheels, as if
he had not cared what became of his Servants,
nor what became of his own glory, and of
these poor souls that he had commanded
these men to come into *Macedonia* to con-
vert; but now my Friends here is a wheel
within a wheel, here is the over-ruling, and
the infinite wisdom of God, appearing in the

Job. 5. 12. very nick of time, catching the
crafty in his own device, and car-

13. rying the counsel of the wicked
and a crafty Devil, that having

vented his malice, and his rage against the ser-
vants of God, thought himself now sure en-
ough of the day; and that his Kingdom
should not be molested in that place; but
we see, that though the Devil is called an old

Serpent; yet the Antient of days

Rev. 20. 2. did out-wit him; and though

Dan. 7. 22. the Devil is called a Lyon for

1 Pet. 5. 8. his strength and power, and a
roaring Lyon for his fury; yet

the Lyon of the Tribe of *Judah* was too many
for him, our Lord Christ did make this very
age of Sathan, this discovery of his malice, a
means

means to throw down the Devil's Kingdom, and to exalt and propagate his own; for we see, that when *Paul* and *Silas* was brought into the Prison, instead of being discouraged, they sung Psalms; instead of lying there until the Irons had entered into their souls, every Prisoners bands was unloosned; well, what follows: the Goaler he comes in, and he finds the doors open, he thought his prisoners had been fled; and, now what course doth he take? he draws out his sword to murder himself, he had been doing what lay in him to murther his soul all the days of his life before, and now he was about, by one act, to murther both soul and body together.

Now without question, the Devil that had encouraged him in the exasperating of his cruelty on these worthy servants of *God*, he was now as ready to rejoice in the downfall of this poor Creature.

My Friends, by the way I pray excuse this digression; O let it be a means to make us have very low contemptible thoughts of this ill conditioned Master the Devil, that when his servants have done him the utmost service they can, he is so far from having ever the better thoughts of them, and from loving of them the better, that he doth wait his opportunity, and doth prompt them on to those actions,

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actions, that he may bring inevitable ruine and
and destruction upon them. I do verily be-
lieve this, that when the Devil saw the poor
mans sword drawn, and the point of it ready
to be set again his breast, that he did rejoice
to see the poor man ready to tumble head-

long into everlasting flames ;
Rom. 16.27. but now this wise *God*, whose
Rev. 1. 14. head is as white as wool, did

frustrate the expectation of this
subtile serpent, he did catch the crafty in his
own devices ; you need not question but the
Devil did endeavour to help forward this cru-
elty, which this *Goaler* did exercise towards
these servants of *God* ; and you may see this
cruelty of his, *God* did so by his wise provi-
dence order it, that it did tend to his conver-
sion.

O happy was it for the poor moaler, that
God did finish two works in one journey ; that
he came to deliver the bodies of his servants
from a temporal prison, and did deliver the
soul of the *Goaler* from the prison of Hell-
fire. Well now, in the verse before my Text,
you see the *Goaler* coming trembling before
the Prisoners of hope, he that before thought
Paul and *Silas*, not worthy to live on the
earth, did now come, and fall down to the
earth at their Feet, and said, *what shall I do to*
be

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be saved? O what a serious question was here? well now, the words in my Text, are an answer to this serious question; why says the Apostle, *believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved.* And thus being come to the words of my Text, I shall briefly divide them into two parts: First, here is an exhortation to a very serious and weighty duty, and that is, *believe in the Lord Jesus Christ.* 2dly. Here is a prevailing exhortation to stir him up to the performance of this duty in these words, *and thou shalt be saved;* in the exhortation we have several particulars, in this first general: First, here is the act, and that is *believe.* 2dly. Here is the object, *upon the Lord Jesus Christ.* 3dly. Take notice of the persons here, that is pressing this exhortation on him, and that was *Paul and Silas:* Those that had been scourged and imprisoned by him, they were now preaching the *Gospel* to him, and without question, with bowels of compassion to his precious souls. They did not now think of *Revenge*, and did not now, while this poor man was in a spiritual Agony, take there advantage against him, and say, thou hast been cruel to us, and now shift for thy self as well as thou canst; no, for first they hinder him from self-Murder, and 2dly, they preach the *Gospel* to him, *believe*

believe on the Lord Jesus Christ ; in the fourth and last place, the person exhorted to this Duty, and that was the moaler, one that had been a violent persecutor, and he is here exhorted to believe in Christ. From whence my Friends take notice of this; that 'tis possible for the greatest sinner to get a broaken heart; one would have thought, that if any man should have gone without a broken heart, and without Christ, and mercy, a persecuting Goaler should, that had persecuted those blessed servants of God, that did come on purpose among them, to do their souls good.

By the way my Friends, take encouragement, you that are the greatest sinners here, (though not to continue in your sins) yet to wait on God in Gospel Ordinances, for you know not how soon God may be pleased to work on your Souls, and to turn you from Darkness to Light, and from the power of Satan unto God ; I shall stand no longer, before I come to the main Observation that I would present you with, which is this that every true believer shall be saved, *believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved* ; my Friends, I having elsewhere made an attempt on these words, and made entrance into them, I shall not now stand to spend much time in the Doctrinal part, but only confirm it by a few

few Scriptures, that by the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established, the first in *Mark. 16. 16.* He that believeth, and is baptised, shall be saved; another we have in the 3d. Chap. of *John, 16. v.* For God so loved the World, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him, should not perish, but have everlasting life; and in the 36. v. of the same Chapter, he that believeth on the Son, hath everlasting Life; he hath it already in its incoation, and when he dyes, he shall have it in its consummation. Now my Friends, I shall come to the Application, which is that I mainly intend, in setting upon this subject this day; and in the first place, if every true believer, shall be saved, this is useful; first, by way of information. 2dly. By way of examination. Thirdly, By way of consolation. Fourthly, By way of exhortation. Fifthly, By way of Instruction. First, 'tis useful by way of Information, if every true Believer shall be saved, then it may inform us of the infinite and boundless love of God to all true Believers. O ! well may the Apostle say in the 3d. of *John, v. 16.* God so saved the World. O my Friends, their is so much contained in this word *so*, as cannot be uttered by the Creature, for when Wisdom it self was speak-

ing of it, he puts it off with a *so*, not as though Christ could not have manifested the very depth of the love of God, but because, though he could have done it, we being but finite creatures, were not in a capacity to comprehend that boundless depth of this love of God to poor sinners: My Friends, I may alude to those words of Job. 11. 7, 8, 9. *Canst thou by searching, find out God? canst thou find out the Almighty unto perfection? it is as high as Heaven; what canst thou know? the measure whereof is longer then the Earth, broader then the Sea.* We see such is the immensity and greatness of this love of God to poor sinners, that 'tis unspeakable and glorious, and I may say of it, that 'tis that, we cannot find out to perfection; *'tis as high as Heaven; what can we do? the measure thereof is longer then the Earth, and broader then the Sea.* This love of God to poor sinners, it may appear in the highest Heaven, for not a Soul that is in glory, but is beholding to this boundless love of God for their salvation. *God so loved the World,* the Holy Ghost puts it off as it were with a question, as if it were that which cannot be uttered, nor indeed can it be uttered by the Creature; for if all the Angels in Heaven should undertake to set forth the love of God, in sending of Christ to

very dye for poor sinners, they must have so much
time as will run parallel with the Line of E-
ternity, or else they will never accomplish
their work; For, so long will this love of God
extend it self in the highest degree the Crea-
ture is capable of.

Oh my friends, was it not wonderful love
in God, that he should send his Son to dye for
Rebels; that he that had but one natural Son,
should give him up to the death for us that
were proclaiming open War against him by
our sins: Oh wonderful boundless love, well
may the Apostle say indeed, in the 5th. of
Romans, the 8th. v. *Herein God commended*
his love towards us; in that while we were
sinners, Christ dyed for us, that is the first.
It may inform us of the glorious effects
of the death and sufferings of the Lord Jesus
Christ; for though the love of God was the
impulsive cause of our salvation, yet it was
the death and suffering, the active and passive
obedience of Jesus Christ, that was the meri-
torious cause thereof; and therefore saith the
Lord in *Isaiah*, 53. when the Holy Ghost had
been there spending a whole Chapter in set-
ting forth the sufferings of Christ for poor
sinners, at length he comes to shew the com-
fortable, and the sweet, and glorious effects
produced thereby, in v. 12. *Therefore will I*

devide him a Portion with the great, and he
shall divide the spoil with the strong because he
hath poured out his soul unto death. There-
fore will I divide him a Portion with the
great; what great is this? Why 'tis the great
Devil, that is so great in power, that he leads
Captive the greatest part of the World; and
he shall divide the spoil with the strong, which
is the same mentioned before, which is com-
mon with the Holy Ghost in the Old Testa-
ment to enjeminant expressions, as if the Lord
should have said, because a poor man hath
sinned, therefore the Devil thinks for to have
the Souls of all the Men and Women in the
World; but saith God, I will divide him a
Portion with the great, and he shall divide the
spoil with the strong; as if the Lord should
have said, my Son shall have some Souls, the
Devil should not have all; for there is some
that I am resolved shall be the fruit of my
Sons Travell, as in the 11. v. of the 53 of Isa.
*He shall see of the Travell of his Soul, and
shall be satisfied,* an Alegorical Metaphor, ta-
ken from a Woman in Travell, that though she
hath a sharp Travell, yet rejoyceth when a
man is born into the world; so though Christ
did indure sore pangs in working out the sal-
vation of his Elect, yet he shall see of the Tra-
vell of his Sons; I will divide him a Portion
with

with the great : Gods people are called his Portion, as in *Deut. 32. v 9.* The Lords Portion is his People. Well saith God, my Son shall have his Portion in Men, and Women, which the Devil doth think to bring to everlasting ruine and destruction; well this is the second thing : O my Friends, that time and strength would permit, for the more clearing up of this great truth, to shew the glorious effects of the death and suffering of the Lord Jesus Christ, towards believers, for the effects of his death, doth extend it self to their adoption, and comfort, and consolation, and happiness, and glory hereafter; all these benefits, & many more are the glorious effects of the death and suffering of the Lord Jesus Christ. Then in the third place, if every true believer shall be received into glory, it may inform us how much we are engaged to love the good spirit of God, that doth seal up to our Souls, our interest in Christ; in whom alone 'tis, that we are brought to glory: 'tis the work of Gods spirit, to show us our want of Christ; and when he hath thus convinced us of our sins, then 'tis the work of this blessed spirit of God to bare up our Souls under the dreadful apprehensions of Gods wrath, that is due to us for sin; so 'tis the work of the blessed Spirit of God to help the Soul to see that

that Christ dyed for Sinners, and that he hath
 dyed for thee; O Soul, thou art a Believer,
 'tis the holy spirit of God that doth comfort
 the Soul in trouble; that doth settle the Soul
 in fear, that doth preserve the Soul in a per-
 severing state, when it would be turned to the
 right hand, or to the left; O my Friends, one
 may say of the Spirit of God, as David did of
 the City of God, *glorious things are spo-
 ken of thee*, so I may say, glorious things are
 spoken of thee, O blessed Spirit of God; and
 therefore as in *Ephes. 4. v. 30. Grieve not
 the holy Spirit of God, whereby you are sealed
 up to the day of Redemption.* In the fourth
 place, if it be so, that every true Believer
 shall be saved, then it may inform us of the
 falsehood of those erroneous Tennes, which
 hold forth of a possibility of falling away from
 true faith; *Paul and Silas did not say to the
 Goaler, if thou believest, and continuest to
 believe, thou shalt be saved, but if thou be-
 lievest, thou shalt be saved*, once a believer
 and ever a believer. My Friends, I hope you
 have not forgot how I did endeavour in
 twelve particulars to shew you from whence
 the believers perseverance doth arise, and all
 the Armenian Tennes in the world shall ne-
 ver be able to strike at the Root of any of
 these twelve foundations of a Believers per-
 severance.

verance. As first, thou that art a Believer, thou hast the eternal decree of God ingaged for thy perseverance, 2 Tim. 2 chap. 18. 19. v.

Heb. 6. 17. Thou hast likewise the Eternal love of God, as another ground of thy perseverance, Jer. 31. v. 3. *I have loved thee with an everlasting love, therefore with love and kindness have I drawn thee;* my Friends, I wonder how men that pretend to have understanding, should be blinded so by the God of this world, to think that the same everlasting love, that did ingage God to set his love on us, should ever be turned into hatred, so as to leave us to our wills, and so to perish for ever; likewise the wisdom of God is engaged herein; Christ makes it a mark of a foolish man, that doth begin to build a house, & is not able to finish it; thou that art a believing Soul, thou art Gods spiritual building; and if he should begin to build, and should not finish it, it would demonstrate great folly in the Divine Majesty, which to assert would be no less then blasphemy, God being the fountain of wisdom; likewise the faithfulness of God is engaged in it. 1 Thes. 5. 24, 25. *Faithful is he that hath called you who also will do it, will do what? you may read in the 23 v. And the very God of peace sanctifie you wholly;* and I pray God your whole spirit, and soul, and body be

be preserv'd blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Till Christ shall comes by judgment, or by death, that Soul in whom this good work is begun, shall be carried on, *Phil. 1. v. 6.* *He that hath begun a good work, will finish it,* and we shewed likewise 'tis clear from the new Covenant of grace, that he hath entered into a new Covenant with the people, and he hath therein engaged himself, that he will put his fear into our hearts, that we shall not depart from him, *Jer. 32. 40.* Likewise the power of God is ingaged herein to preserve every true believer from total falling away from God, *2 Pet. 1. 5.* *Who are kept by the power of God, through Faith unto Salvation.* Likewise also the glory of the Son of God is engaged in it ; Christ is the foundation of this spiritual building, he is the chief Corner Stone. Now my Friends, I pray mind it, whensoever a house falls, the foundation is usually defective, and the Corner stone will be sure to fall ; nay, he is the top-stone too, as you may see in *Zachary.* Now Christ being all these in the spiritual Superstructure, it must be, that Jesus Christ must fall himself, whensoever a true believer doth finally fall off from God. Again, we shewed likewise it doth arise from the influence, that the blessed Spirit of God hath on the hearts of those that are

are believers, as in the 1. Joh. 2. v. 20. But you have an *unction* from the Holy One, and you know all things; he had been shewing before what a sight of Antichrists and Apostates there were; but saith he, you have received an *unction* from the Holy One; you have that which they want, they had only an outside profession, but they wanted the inward teachings of the spirit, as in the 26 and 27th. ver.

Isa. 59. 19. You may there see how God doth keep a soul in a persevering frame, *So shall they fear the Name of the Lord from the West, & his glory from the Rising of the Sun, when the enemy shall come in like a Flood, the spirit of the Lord shall lift up a Standard against him.* The words are very emphatical, whether they do point at the Devil, or at the corruptions of our own hearts, which are the greatest persecutors of the godly; 'tis a military expression, taken from Souldiers, when they lift up their Ensigns in defiance of their Enemies; and as Christ saith, *upon this Rock have I built my Church, that the gates of Hell shall not prevail against it,* so saith the Spirit, here when the Enemy breaks in like a Flood, then shall the Spirit of the Lord lift up his Standard against them; Isa. 30. v. 21. You may see how the spirit doth proceed in his work, to keep the Soul in a persevering frame,

whensoever the poor Soul is ready to turn to the Right hand, or to the Left, then he doth whisper a sweet word in their ear, *this is the way, walk in it*, and truly that is a notable word, Isa. 61. v. 8. *And I will direct their work in truth*, 'tis God by the influence of his spirit, directing of our works in truth, that doth keep us from falling away from God. I hope my Friends, these are enough to confirm this fourth truth, that true believers cannot fall off from God. Fifthly, It may inform us of the vast difference that is between the state of true Believers, and the state of Unbelievers; for if you look in those Scriptures wk mentioned, Mark. 16. v. 16. *He that believeth, and is baptized, shall be saved; but he that believeth not, shall be damned*, and so likewise in John 3. there you may see the difference set down, *He that believeth on the Son, hath everlasting life; and he that believeth not on the Son, shall not see life, but the Wrath of God abideth on him.*

The true believer is said to have everlasting life, that is, he hath the assurance of it sooner or later; he hath it in this life, in its incoation, though not in its consummation. I pray my Friends, if you remember no more, carry away this, that if Heaven, and Eternal life is not within you, while you are in this world,

you

you shall never enter into *Heavenly* or *Eternal* life, when you shall leave this world ; Now herein appears the vast difference that is between the state of a *Believer* and an *Unbeliever* ; as a believer hath the Heaven of Spiritual Light from God, and the same spiritual love to God, & the same spiritual joy in God, and the same spiritual Communion with God, now in this life, as they shall have in the life to come, in respect of the nature and quality thereof, though not in respect of the quantity ; so likewise a wicked man hath the same spiritual darkness in his understanding, and the same irregularity in his affection, and the same contumacy in his will now, as he will have in Hell, in respect of the nature and quality thereof, though not in respect of the degree and quantity ; now hellish Drunkards make themselves Drunk with Wine and strong beer, and in Hell God will make them pledg the Devil at a full Cup of his wrath ; which being powered into the Cup of his Indignation, will make them Drunk for ever and ever ; the Hellish Adulterer burns in his Lust here, and God will make him burn in Hell for it hereafter : As heavenly Saints love God, and propound his glory as their ultimate end in all their duties ; so hellish Sinners hate God, and propound their own glory as their ultimate

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make end in duties; as believers are daily more and more compleat in virtue, so unbelievers are daily more and more replete with Vices; and thus we see the vast difference that is between believers and unbelievers in this life; and look upon them at the hour of death, and see what a vast difference there will be then between them, as in *Prov. 14. 32.* *The wicked is driven away in his wickedness, but the Righteous hath hope on his death;* and look upon them at the Resurrection, and see what a vast difference there is between them, as in *Dan. 12. v. 2.* *And many of them that sleep in the dust of the Earth, shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt;* and look upon them at the denunciation of that dreadful sentence, and see the vast difference that is between them, as in *Mat. 25. 33, 34.* where the Righteous & the believer is set *on his right hand*, and the unbeliever *on the left*, *Then shall the King say to them on his right hand, come ye blessed of my Father;* come poor soul, thou hast called me to come to thee many a time, in duty then come thou now to me; the world looked upon thee to be a cursed Creature, but I pronounce thee blessed; it may be, whilst thou wert in the world, the Foxes had a priviledg above thee, they had holes to hide their heads

in;

in ; But now there is a Kingdom prepared for thee, but now see what will become of unbelievers, as in the 41. v. here is a dreadful sentence past against them. *Depart from me, here is a separation from all joy and happiness; you said to me in your life-time, depart from me, for we desire not the knowldg of the ways, now depart from me ye Cursed, into everlasting fire,* there is the extremity of pain and torment, thou wast one that did burn in thy lusts here, and thou wast one that was inflamed with thy lusts, or with wine and strong drinck, or with hatred against me ; now go into everlasting fire, it was the Devil whose voice thou wouldest obey, and whose work thou wouldest do, and now thou shalt have enough of him : now here you may see the vast difference between the state of all true believers and unbelievers.

Now believers, *thy shall cease from all their mourning, and all their sorrow shall be turned into joy,* then thou shalt have joy without sorrow, and health without sickness, and life without death, and shall have the thinings of Gods Countenance, without the least mixture of the hidng of his face, and as for thou that art an unbeliever, what wilt thou do, a vast difference there will be between thy condition and a true believers, when thou art cast into everlasting flames, which I wish that none

here may experience the torments of, when thou shalt never more have the least hope of the least Ray of the Son of Consolation shining on thee: Oh then what woe and terror will surprize thy Soul, and what unspeakable horror, to think that thou hast been all thy life time heaping up to thy self wrath against the day of wrath.

I should have proceeded to other inferences, but I shall defer them till the Afternoon: Consider what hath been said, and the Lord give you understanding.

The end of the Morning Sermon.

Tben



Then in the sixth place, if it be so, that all
 true believers shall be saved, it may in-
 form us of the great necessity we have
 of hearing the Word Preached, though my
 Friends, God is able to convert without
 means; he is a free agent, he can work how
 he will, and when he will, but Preaching is the
 ordinary means whereby God doth turn Sin-
 ners from Satan to God, 2 Chron. 4 4, 5.
 where you may see there is a molten sea,
 which was a Type of Christ, it stood upon 12.
 Oxen, three looking towards the North, and
 three looking towrds the West, and three looking
 towards the South, and three looking towards
 the East; and if you look into the Revelati-
 ons, there you shall see the Elect shall come
 from the East, and from the West, and from
 the North, and from the South, and there is
 twelve doors open in the new Jerusalem,
 three North, three West, three South, and
 three East, Christ he is the Molten Sea, through
 whom

whom 'tis we are brought to Life, he it is that
 is the Sea of Grace and mercy for poor Sin-
 ners ; therefore, if you would have this Sea
 of Grace, the Lord Jesus Christ, we must have
 an eye unto the twelve Oxen, the twelve A-
 postles, and their successors, which are the Mi-
 nisters of the Gospel ; and saith the Apostle
 in *Rev. 10. 17.* *So faith cometh by hearing,*
and hearing by the Word of God. My Friends,
 I durst not limit the Holy One of Israel, so as
 to say, there is no way to convert a Soul, but
 by Preaching of the Gospel ; but this is the
 ordinary way God is pleased to make use of,
 for the opening of their eyes, that are blinded
 by the god of this world ; for we are all na-
 turally blind, and we must lye by the way side,
 to be cured of this blindness ; the Preaching
 of the word, they are Gods Pools of Bethesda,
 whereby he doth cure those that are troubled
 with spiritual lameness, and those that come
 into Congregations possessed with Devils, as
 in *Mark. 1. 23, 24. 25.* He casts out a Devil
 of Pride out of one Soul, and a Devil of Co-
 vertuousness out of another Soul, and the De-
 vil of Lust out of another, and those devillish
 Lusts Christ doth cast out while we are in the
 Synagogue.

Then 7thly. It may inform us what ene-
 mies they are to our immortal Souls, that go
 about

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about to deprive us of the means of Grace; you see Preaching is the ordinary means for the Conversion of Souls, so they must be soul-murderers that go about to hinder the preaching of the Gospel.

Eightly. It may inform us of the uncharitablenes and censoriousnes of those persons that for small differences from them, in circumstances of Religion, will send whole Congregations to everlasting perdition, that if they cannot comply with them in every circumstance, they are presently all damned: But we see that it is not being of this or that perswasion, that will bring us to Heaven, but believing in Jesus Christ; but yet my Friends, though such a thing is desirable, and we hope will be when the Lyon shall lye down with the Lamb, and the Leopard shall eat grass with the Oxe, yet in the mean while, let us not pass such uncharitable censures on those that cannot comply with us in every circumstantial point in Religion; you see faith is the main thing that the Apostle drives at; believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, that is the main thing that is to be looked at; I shall now come to an use of examination, if it be so that none but true believers shall be saved, then it lyes upon us to see whether we are such believers or not: My Friends, if any of us were but to lay out a

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little

little money upon a purchase, though of a little value, how circumspect should we be, least our evidences should prove false, and this care is not commendable neither ; but how will this condemn the practice of the greatest part of the World, that are so strict and careful about trifles, and neglect the concerns of their immortal Souls ; I shall endeavour to lay down some Rules and Tryals, which by the assistance of Gods spirit, we may know whether we are true believers, and so consequently such as are in a state of Salvation. First, would'st thou know whether thou art a true believer, then try whether thou dost know God, for we will never venture any great concernment upon a person that we know little of ; thou that art a believer, thou hast greater concerns to venture on God, then ten thousand worlds ; me-thinks I hear some say, what do you think we don't know God to be our Father, and Christ our Redeemer. My Friends have you any reality of the knowldg of God in your Souls : have you a practical knowldg of him, see what our Lord Christ saith, Job. 17. 3. *And this is Life Eternal, that they may know the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent;* the Practical knowldg of God is Eternal life, in its incoation. My Friends, do you know God so in his power, as to fear him ; and

and in his mercy to love him, and in his omniscency, not to commit any sin in secret, though the eye of the Creator be upon thee, this was a sign that Joseph had a true knowledg of God, that when he was tempted to sin, which possibly might have been hid from the eyes of the World, yet he dared not to commit it, but on the contrary, if you know so little of God in his mercy, that it doth not draw out your love to him : and know him so little in his Justice, that you see no need of Jesus Christ to be your Redeemer, and you know him not in his faithfulness, that you dare not trust him, then 'tis a sign thou art an unbeliever : canst thou say with Paul, *I know whom I have believed,* 2 Tim. 12.

2ly. If thou art one, that art a true believer, then thou art one that hast an indeared affection to God ; when a Soul believes that God hath sent his dear Son to dye for him, and this comes to be realized to the Soul, that soul is set all in a flame with love to God. Friends, observe this, that proportionable to the apprehensions we have of the love of God to us, in Jesus Christ, such is the manifestation of our love to God ; what is the reason the Martyrs have embraced the flames with such courage, which at other times it may be, a few days before, they were ready to sink at the apprehen-

fions of the bitter cup they were to drink, but
 the clear sense they had of the love of God to
 their souls. We know this my Friends, that the
 greater and clearer evidences we have of that
 good, which at present we do receive from a
 Friend, or hopes to receive from them for the
 future, it doth abundantly stir up our affecti-
 ons, and inflame our love towards them, if we
 look into the *Corinthians*, we may see that
 God hath put Faith and Love together; and
 what God hath joyned together, let no man
 put asunder, *1 Cor. 13. 13.* *And now abideth*
Faith, Hope, and Charity, Gal 5. 6. *Neither*
Circumcision availeth any thing, nor Uncircum-
cision, but faith which worketh by love. Friends,
 how do you find it, what love have you to the
 worship of God, & to the Ordinances of God,
 and to the people of God; do your souls bear
 you witness, that you can say of the word of
 God, as *David* did, *that 'tis sweeter than the*
honey, or the honey-comb; in the 3d. place,
 Try it by your hope likewise; a true faith doth
 always accompany a true hope: 'Tis true
 Friends, we had need be criticol about these
 things, for go and ask an unbeliever whether
 he loves God, and he will answer you, 'tis pit-
 ty he should live else; and again ask them,
 whether they hope to have salvation by Christ
 alone; yes say they, who do you think we
 shoud

should have it from besides, 1 Job. 3. 3. But what saith the Apostle of this hope, and every man that hath this hope, he purifies himself as he is pure. My Friends, all the difference, that is between faith and hope is this: Faith doth respect the certainty of the promise, and hope doth respect the goodness of the thing promised, and where one of these are, there they are both, for they both go together; but now you may say what is the meaning of this purifying himself; as he is pure, can any one be so pure as God is: My Friends, 'tis altogether impossible, that the Creature should attain to that degree of perfection and purity that is in God, pure signifies to be without mixture; a person may be said to be purely evil, as God is purely good; he purifies himself as he is pure, that is, he hath not a heart for God, & another for the world; he is really such as he seems to be, he is without hypocrisie. 4thly. Again, wouldst thou know the soundness of thy Faith, then try it by thy constant implacable hatred of sin; this we may see laid down as a true mark of Faith, Acts 15. 9. *Purifying their hearts by Faith:* Faith doth present the soul with a Crucified Jesus, as Crucified for it in particular; the formal Professor pleaseth himself with this, that Christ dyed for sinners, and we are all sinners. My Friends, there is nothing that gives such a mortal wound to sin, in the soul of believers, as when they do apprehend that Christ did suffer such grievous things, for its self

self in particular. 5thly. Wouldest thou know, whether thy faith be right, then see if thou hast a high esteem of Jesus Christ, *1 Pet. 2. 7. Unto you therefore that believe, he is precious*, or he is a honour; a true believer, he looks upon it as his honour, that he is a member of Christs mystical body, that he is a branch in that blessed Vine; he looks upon it as his honour, that Christ will look upon him as his Servant; as the Emperor Theodosius said, *he looked upon it to be more honour to him, that he was a Servant of Jesus Christ, then that he was Emperour of the World.* But I have seen such Christians that would be very forward to own the people of God, and Messengers of Christ, in times of prosperity; but when the ways of God hath been persecuted, & the Ordinances of Christ hath been trampled under feet, then they would look upon them, as if they had never seen them before: My Friends, this is a bad sign of a true Faith, and of a good Christian, so you that believe he is an honour; my Friends, is Christ precious to you in all his Offices, as King, Priest, and Prophet; thou that art a believer, I can tell how 'tis with thee, as well as thy self; thou dost never more rejoice, i then when thou canst experience the power of Christ in thy Soul, in subduing of thy Corruptions, and bringing under the Old man; and is he precious to thee in all his attributes? a wicked man, God is precious to him in his mercies, but as for the power of God, and the Justice of God, they

they cannot indure to hear of ; Let a Minister go and tell them of the terrors of God, they will presently cry, Oh there is a Legal Preacher indeed, enough to make one run mad; & in a word, to a true believer, Christ is precious to him in all his Offices and attributes, and in all his providential dispensations, and in all his promises, and in his threatenings, he is precious to every true believer. Again, sixtly, wouldest thou know whether thou art indeed a true believer, then see whether thou hast the witness of it in thy self, *1 John 5. 6.* *He that believeth, hath the Witness in himself;* Oh but me-thinks I hear some poor soul ready to say ; Oh, if it must be so, I am in a worse condition then I was aware of ; I thought I could experienced some of the other Tryals, but I have so little of the spirits witness in me, that I question whether I have any true faith : Now the Devil is very subtile, as he will perswade a wicked man, that he hath the marks of a true believer, so he will perswade a true believer, that he hath them not, when he hath them ; as for example, suppose a person is in great trouble, for fear they don't love God, they come into the Congregation, and there it may be, God hath directed his Minister to such a subject, where he hath been treating on such a truth of Gods love to us, and of our love to him; if God hath loved thee, then he hath subdued thy Corruptions, these little Foxes

Foxes he hath taken and destroyed ; now it may be the spirit of God hath set home this word on the soul, and what he can say, this hath been my condition. Now Friends, there was the witness that we are speaking of. *Rom. 8. 16. The Spirit bearing witness with our spirit, that we are the Children of God.* Now my Friends, you that are so ready to say, that you have not the witness of God in you ; wouldest thou part with that little glimmering hope thou hast of true Faith, for the greatest Estate that a Wicked man hath in the world ? so saith the soul, I would not ; and that as a sign that thou hast the witness in thee, though the spirit of God hath not cleared it up so to thee, has thou deſiret but be thankful to God for it, and make heed thou dost not provoke the Lord to take away that little comfort thou hast.

Eighty. If thou art one that hath true faith, thou mayest know it by this, it doth so realize the glory that is to be revealed to thy soul, that it makes thee earnest in the prosecution of the means that God hath appointed in order to the attainment of glory ; this we shall make to appear by comparing two Scriptures together, in the 11th. of *Hebren*, you may see that Faith is the evidence of things not seen, and the substance of things hoped for ; now if you do but look all along in this Chapter, he comes to show what glorious effects Faith doth produce in those that it doth realize.

realize the glory that is to come unto them ; he telleth us 'tis the substance of things hoped for, and the evidence of things not seen, that is not seen with an eye of reason, *Luk. 13.23, 24.* then said one to him, Lord, are there few that be saved ? now see, Chrift doth not answer him according to his Question, but doth propose to him an exhortation, to stir him up to a weighty duty, *strive to enter in at the strait gate* ; as if Chrift had said, what needest thou to trouble thy self whether many or few shall be saved ? if thou art one that strives like a man in an Agony (for so it may be rendered), to thrust in at the straight gate, that will be an evidence unto thee, that thou art one that shall be saved. Friends, how doth the hope of glory spur you on to duty ; doth thy Faith realize the things of another world to you, that it makes you run in the paths of Gods commandments. But if on the contrary, if thou dost pretend to have Faith, and yet notwithstanding, go on in a formal lazy profession of Religion ; 'tis a sign thou never had the things of another world realized to thee ; such as are our evidences for the attainment of future good, such will be our endeavours, in the means whereby we are to attain it, if thou hast a well-grounded hope for salvation in the world to come, it will make thee earnest in

thy endeavours for the attainment of it. In the next place, another sign of true Faith is this, if thou art a true believer, then thy faith doth enable thee to overcome the world; this we may see in the 12 Rev. and there appeared a great wonder in Heaven, a Woman Cloathed with the Sun, and the Moon under her feet. By the Women we understand the whole Church of God, and every particular member thereof; and by the Moon we understand the World.

And as the Moon is very unstable in her motions, and always increasing and decreasing, so there is no certainty at all in Creature enjoyments. And the Sun is never eclipsed, but when the Moon comes between us, and the Sun; and so my Friends, the Moon, this world, is that which doth make an interposition between God and his people; how doth the joys of this world eat out the comforts which we should have enjoyed. My Friends, 'tis a hard thing to keep the world under our feet, for 'tis a round thing, and I will tell you how true believers do come to get the world under their Feet.

You that have once enjoyed the glorious beams of the Sun of Righteousness shining into your souls, the pittiful things of this world would seem as nothing: Now my Friends see how it is with you, which is greater in your eye

eye, the Sun or the Moons; which if it were put to your choyce, would you take to live in the midst of prosperity without God, or in the midst of adversity with God.

Again, in the next place, try thy Faith by thy Repentance; I know there is much dispute concerning this, some hold that Faith is wrought before Repentance, and some on the contrary; but truly my Friends, I am of neither of their judgments, for my judgment is, that all graces are wrought in the soul at one and the same time; & though Repentance is made manifest in the soul before Faith, *Mark 1.15.* *Repent you, and believe the Gospel;* Friends, what Repentance have you got, I thank God say you, I have Repented long agoe, though I cannot talk as some can, and make so many words, I cannot commit any sin, but my heart smites me for it: Oh my Friends, there is many sorts of Repentance that a sinner may have, and yet may go without a true Repentance; there is an over-lay and slight repentance, and such a repentance had *Ahab*, and then there is dispairing repentance, and such a repentance had *Judas*: but for this Evangelical repentance, 'tis such a grace that few attain to it, not scarce one among twenty, and without this, Evangelical repentance, there is no true grace in the soul; and I shall endeavour to show, that

Faith

Faith and Repentance is wrought together for repentance without faith, will end in desperation; and faith without repentance will end in presumption.

In the last place, if thou art one that hath indeed true faith, thou art made willing to suffer whatsoever God should be pleased to inflict on thee, this saith the Apostle, where he speaks there concerning persecution *Phil. 2. 29.* *For unto you 'tis given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake;* this true Faith, it makes the soul willing to suffer for God, whatsoever the wicked adversaries of the people of God shall be pleased to lay on them; O faith the soul, shall I be unwilling to endure a little suffering for his sake, that was exposed to such suffering for me: O faith the soul, shall not I be willing to suffer a little affliction from God, whether poverty, wants, or sickness, or the like, seeing the Lord Jesus Christ was contented for my sake to be a man of sorrow, and acquainted with grief, for to suffer both hunger and thirst, and shall not we be willing to suffer for God, whatsoever he is pleased to call us to, seeing he hath pleased to do so much for us, as he hath done.

And so much for this Use of Examination; I should have proceeded to a Use of Consolati-

on to true believers, for this Doctrine affords a spring of comfort unto such which I should only hint at, first by way of privation, showing from what they are delivered: econdly by way of provision, what unexpressable & unconceivable glory, God hath laid up in store for them, which I would have willingly inlarged upon: There was likewise on my spirit, a Use of Exhortation, in which I would have moved those who have been participaters of this pretious Faith. 1. To be thankful for it, to him, from whom they have received it, as the gift of God. 2. To let nothing be wanting for the nourishing, and for the strengthening of it, by the Application of former experiences of Gods goodness, & also to be careful that they wound not, nor weaken their Faith by running themselves into those freights and exigencies which they have not a clear and special call unto, either upon a civill, or religious account; but I must pass by these things, because my time is already passed by, and conclude with one Use of Exhortation, or rather of invitation to those which are yet out of Christ; and oh that God would be pleased to put some word into my mouth, which might beget in thee an earnest desire, and panting after an interest in Jesus Christ, the glorions object of our faith: oh that I could hear some of you crying out with the poor

poor Goaler, what shall I do to be sav'd; in
 the time of sickness, who will not cry out,
 what shall I do to be restored to my health,
 the want of outward mercies are quickly felt,
 but how few are sensible of their want in spiri-
 tuals; beware likewise that the Devil entice
 you into desparation, by perswading thee that
 thou hast no faith, and therefore art a repro-
 bate, for there is not a Saint on earth, nor an
 Angel in Heaven, to whom Gods final repro-
 bation is revealed, touching any particular per-
 son yet in this life, who hath not sinned the sin
 against the Holy Ghost; be not therefore by
 these wiles of Sathan discouraged from waiting
 on the Ordinances, or make thee say I have no
 hope, I have loved strangers, and after them I
 will go; but remember this, that as great sin-
 ners as thou have attained to this Faith, and
 are now in glory with the Lord; but on the
 other hand, let not presumption cease your
 heart; for of these two snares of the Devil, I
 may justly say what was said of *Saul* and *Da-
 vid* in another case, *Saul hath slain his thou-
 sand*, and *David his ten thousands*, so I may
 likewise say, that despair hath slain his thou-
 sand, but presumption hath ten thousands: oh
 my Friends, take heed of presumptions, pro-
 crastination in the great concerns of your pre-
 cious souls; 'tis the present time that God
 calls

calls for, 'tis to day, if you will bear his voyce
 barden not your heart, Psal 95. acquaint now
 thy self with him, and be at peace thereby, good
 shall come unto thee, Job. 22.21. you that are
 in the prime strength and flower of your years,
 forget not that momento, to remember thy Cre-
 ator in the days of thy Youth, Eccles. 12. 1.
 Agree with thine Adversary quickly whilst
 thou art in the way with him, Mat. 5. 25. Now
 is the accepted time, and now is the day of sal-
 vation, 2 Cor. 6. 3. Oh poor soul, whilst thou
 flatterest thy self with future Repentance,
 thou wouldest do well to consider both the
 shortness and uncertainty of thy life, thou
 mayst resolve to repent to morrow, and before
 to morrow thou mayst be in Hell; therefore
 poor soul, I do beseech thee, as if God did be-
 seech thee by me, slip no present opportunity
 of thy hearing the word preached, where it is
 preached in the power and purity of it; for
 there mayst thou expect the presence of God
 with it and his blessing upon it; and though
 thou shouldest come there with the Devil of
 unbelief in thy heart, thou knowest not but
 there God may cast him out, and if it shall be
 thus with thee in thy waiting on Gods Ordin-
 ances, that there shall be any stirrings on thy
 heart, and the word fer home upon thee.

Take heed the pleasures, or cares of the
 world

world do not choak it, but follow home with serious meditation, and beg of God to confirm it with his power ; and thou knowest not how soon God may be pleased to set it home with such power as may make thee cry out, *what shall I do to be saved* ; and though the work may be somewhat strange to thy corrupt nature, yet if God be pleased to undertake the work, it shall prevail, and then what reason hast thou poor soul to bless the Lord for his unspeakable mercy to thee-wards, to bring thee from darkness unto light, from the power of Sathan unto God, and it will not be long e're thou shalt be for ever adoring the riches of Gods free grace towards thee in Jesus Christ, to whom with the Father, the highest and ultimate object of our Faith, and the holy spirit, be all honour, and glory, and praise, *Amen.*

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FINIS.

ERRATA.

Page 29. line 18. for he'l suffer, read he have suffered,
p. 48. l. 9, 10. for make the ears thin and empty,
r. make thin the ears of thy holy Conversation: p. 111.
l. 4, & 5. are misplaced: p. 111. l. 19. for living, read
loving, l. 20. for **למה** **זובחני** r. **למה** **נובחני** l. 21.
l. 21. for Lamasbachthani, read Lama-gnatzabtanie,
p. 13. l. 12. for **חטא** read **חטא** l. 21. for **עט**, read
עט